GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RAILWAYS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1908
ANSWERED ON:11.12.2008
INCIDENT OF FIRE IN GAUTAMI EXPRESS
Khan Shri Mohammad Tahir;Nahata Smt. P. Jaya Prada;Patle Shri Shishupal Natthu;Yadav Shri Kailash Nath Singh

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether large number of passengers were burnt alive when Secunderabad − Kakinada Gautami Express caught fire near Warangal in Andhra Pradesh as reported in all the newspapers recently;

(b) if so, the details of casualties occurred and whether any preliminary investigation into the cause of the accident has been done;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to prevent such accidents in future?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (DR. R. VELU)

(a) to (d) : A statement is attached.

STATEMENT REFFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) to (d) OF UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1908 BY SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA, SHRI MOHD. TAHIR, SHRI KAILISH NATH SINGH YADAV & SHRI SHSHUPAL N. PATLE TO BE ANSWERED IN LOK SABHA ON 11.12.2008 REGARDING INCIDENT OF FIRE IN GAUTAMI EXPRESS.

(a) to (c):

(i) 31 passengers died due to fire in Gautami Express on 01.08.2008.

(ii) Commissioner for Railway Safety, Secunderabad has conducted statutory enquiry into the cause of fire. He has passed the following remarks in his preliminary report −

(1) The fire in the coaches of Train No. 2738 Gautami Express between Kesamudram- Tadalapusalapalli Railway stations in Kazipet-Vijayawada double line, Broad-Gauge electrified section of Secunderabad Division of South Central Railway appears to be due to some unidentified highly combustible substance (in liquid or solid form) present in the S-10 coach, which was kept there by some unidentified person or persons while the train was running at a speed of 75 kilometers per hour, the fire appeared to have originated from the floor level, at Nekkonda.

(2) The accident falls under the Category "failure of person/persons other than Railway staff".

(iii) Government Railway Police/ Warangal have also registered a case vide CR No. 191/2008 under classification-accidental fire and under section 174 of the Criminal Procedure Code dated 01.08.2008. It is under investigation with the Deputy Superintendent / Railway Police.

d): # Frequent drives are conducted against carrying of inflammable materials and dangerous goods in trains and cases are registered under section 164 of the Railways Act by the Railway Protection Force.

Regular checks are conducted against smoking in trains and cases are registered under section 167 of the Railways Act by the Railway Protection Force.

Railways are providing fire extinguishers under the charge of the Guard in the Rear Second-class Luggage Room and in Air conditioned coaches for fire fighting in case of any incident.

Traveling public is being briefed/educated through Mega phones and public address system not to carry inflammable articles on trains.

Surprise checks are being conducted on the two-wheelers booked for transportation on trains and action is being taken if vehicles are found with petrol.

All train escorting staff as well as station duty staff are briefed to inform the nearest fire service station to meet eventuality, whenever

fire incidents are reported on running trains.

Wide publicity is being given through print/electronic media against the danger of carrying inflammable articles/explosives in trains.